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PENCILER, INKER

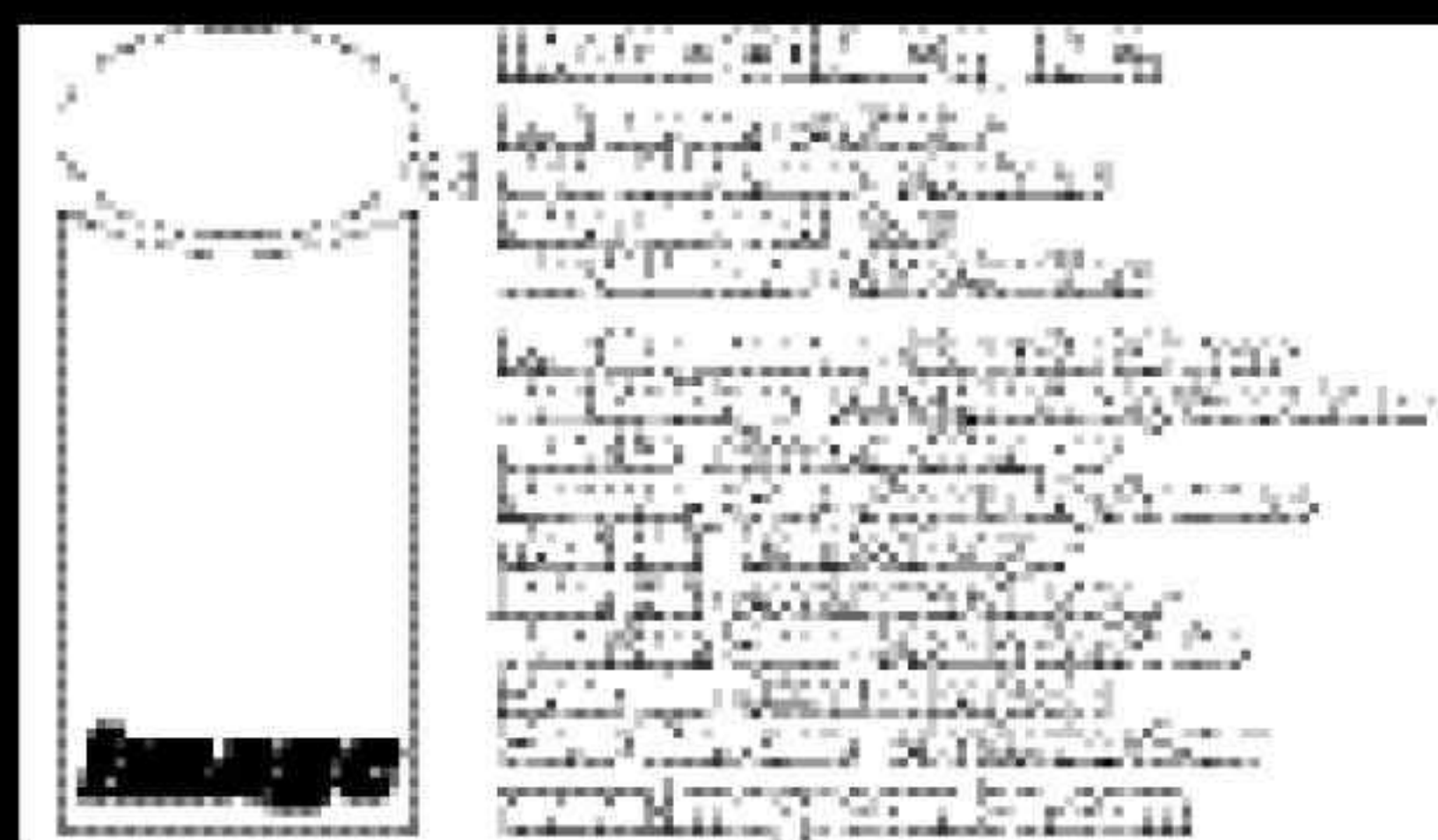
BILL CRABTREE

COLORIST

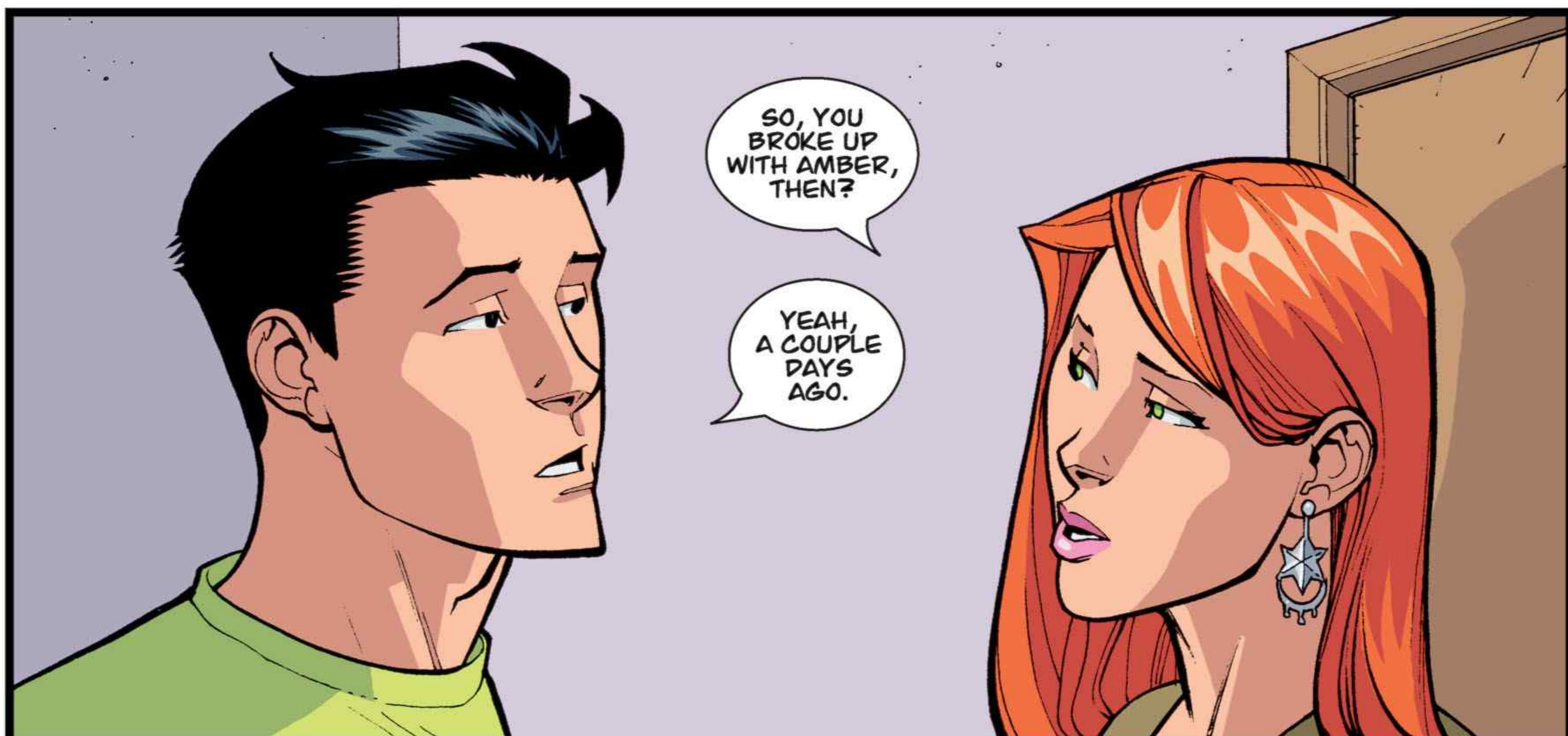
RUS WOOTON

LETTERER

CREATED BY ROBERT KIRKMAN & CORY WALKER



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WERE YOU GOING TO CALL ME?



OF COURSE. I JUST... I **JUST** BROKE UP WITH HER. I STILL HAD SOME THINGS TO WORK OUT, Y'KNOW?

I WAS GOING TO CALL YOU. OR JUST VISIT.



SO--YOU THINK THIS IS GOING TO WORK OUT?

US, I MEAN?



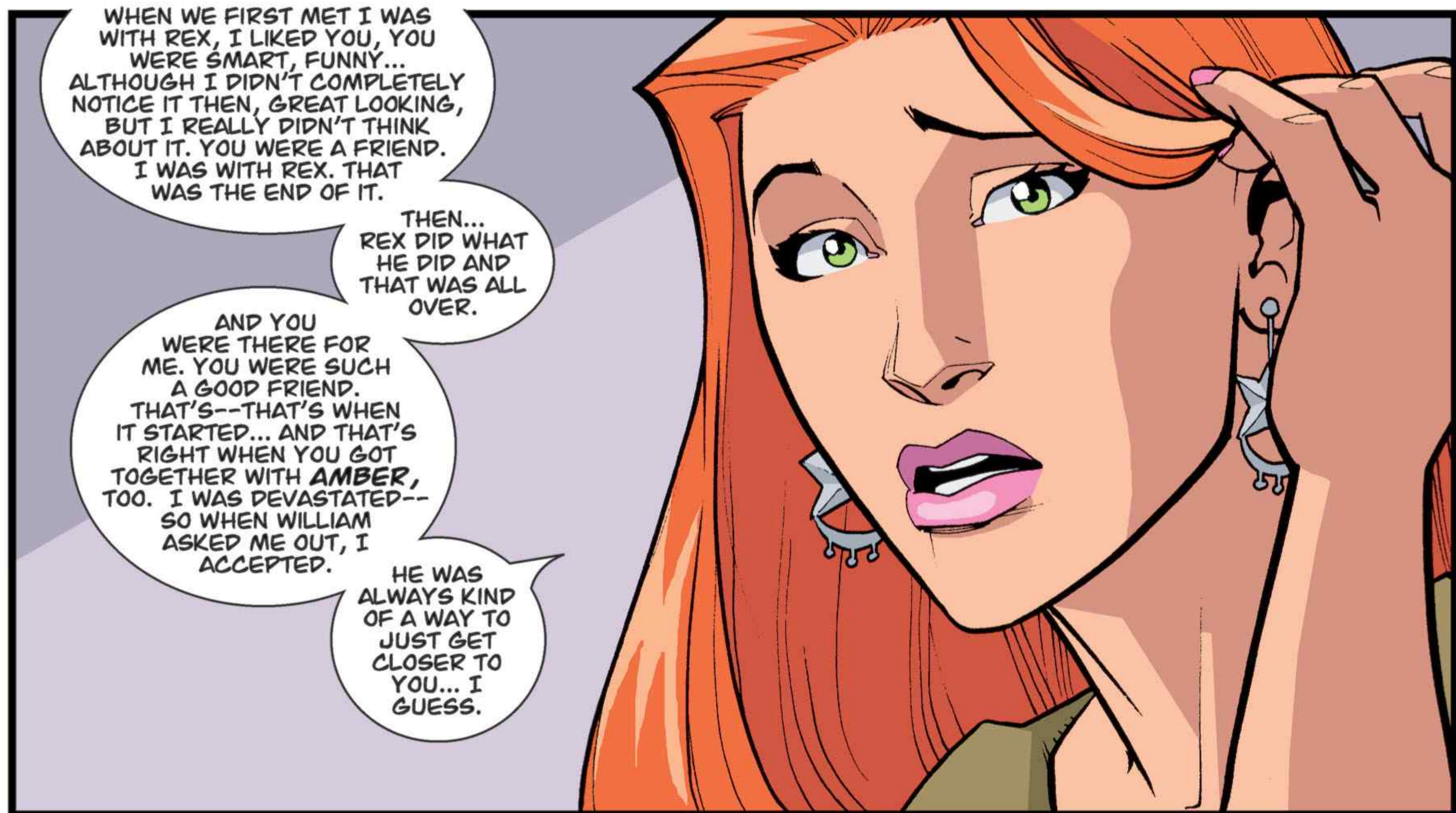
OF COURSE, EVE. I HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU. I WAS JUST TAKING SOME TIME.

LOOK AT YOU--WHERE'S THAT NAME BRAND **ATOM EVE** CONFIDENCE? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LIKE THIS.



I DON'T KNOW. IT'S... **UGH.**

THIS HAS BEEN A LONG TIME COMING, FOR ME.



WHEN WE FIRST MET I WAS WITH REX, I LIKED YOU, YOU WERE SMART, FUNNY... ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T COMPLETELY NOTICE IT THEN, GREAT LOOKING, BUT I REALLY DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT. YOU WERE A FRIEND. I WAS WITH REX. THAT WAS THE END OF IT.

THEN... REX DID WHAT HE DID AND THAT WAS ALL OVER.

AND YOU WERE THERE FOR ME. YOU WERE SUCH A GOOD FRIEND. THAT'S--THAT'S WHEN IT STARTED... AND THAT'S RIGHT WHEN YOU GOT TOGETHER WITH **AMBER**, TOO. I WAS DEVASTATED--SO WHEN WILLIAM ASKED ME OUT, I ACCEPTED.

HE WAS ALWAYS KIND OF A WAY TO JUST GET CLOSER TO YOU... I GUESS.



IF HE **EVER** EVEN **IMPLIES** THAT WE SLEPT TOGETHER I'LL KILL HIM.

IT **DIDN'T** HAPPEN.



HE HASN'T YET... BUT UH, DULY NOTED.



AFTER I BROKE UP WITH WILLIAM, I JUST-- IT WAS PAINFUL TO BE AROUND YOU. YOU AND **AMBER** WERE SO HAPPY IT... I **DID** GO TO AFRICA TO HELP PEOPLE, TO DO GOOD...

BUT BEING AWAY FROM YOU WAS A BIG PART OF IT.



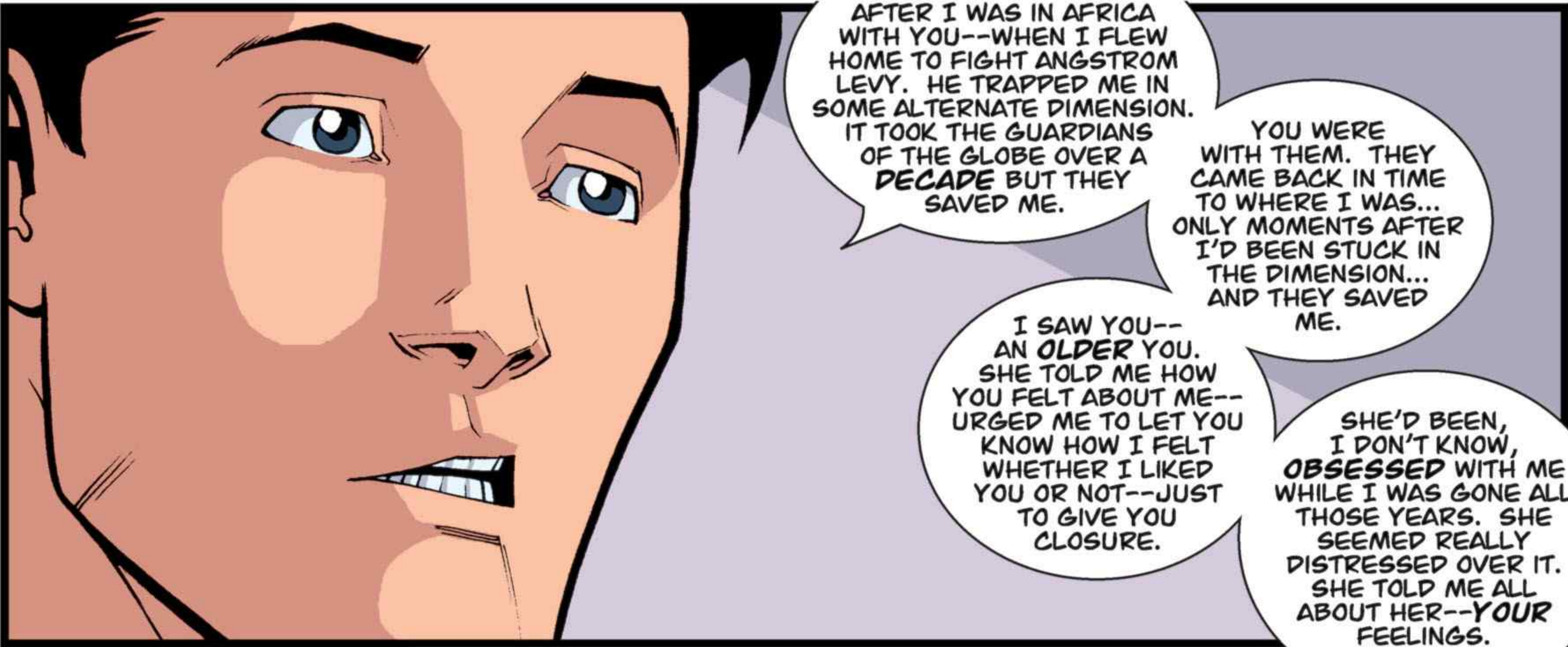
I MISSED YOU SO MUCH.

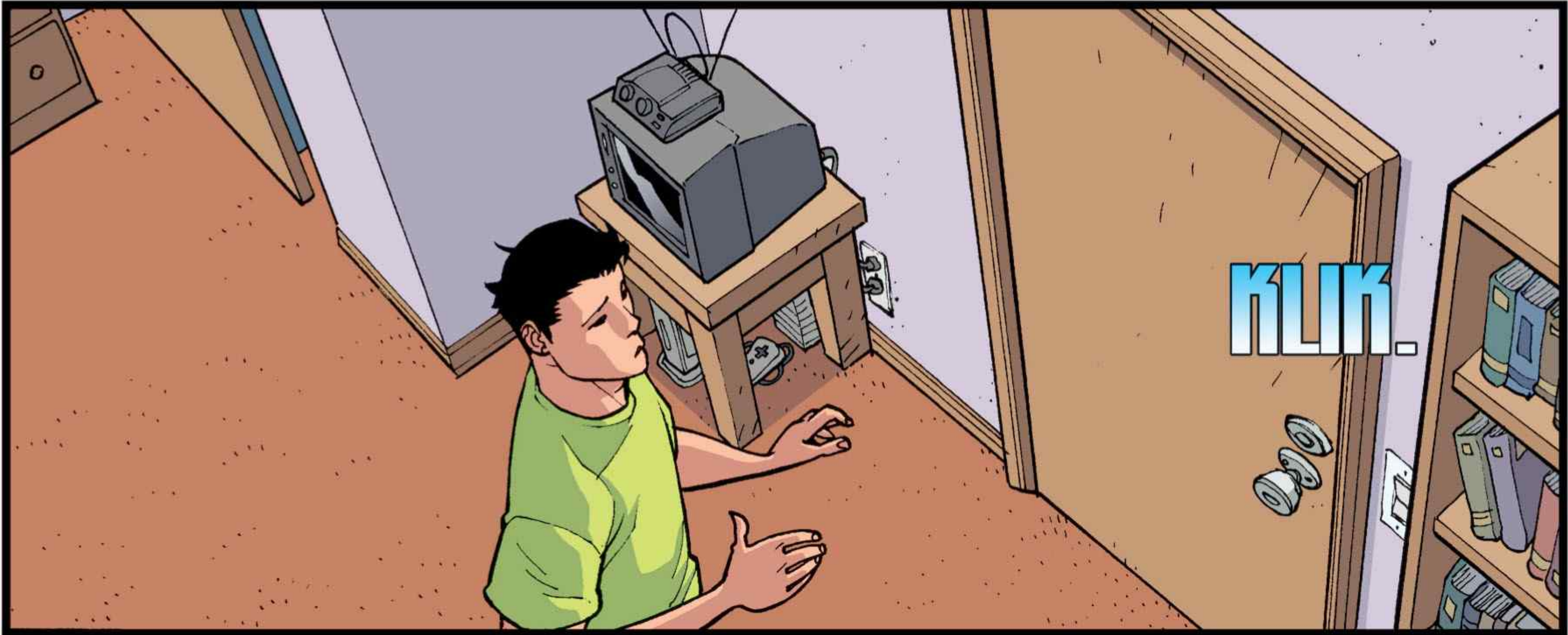
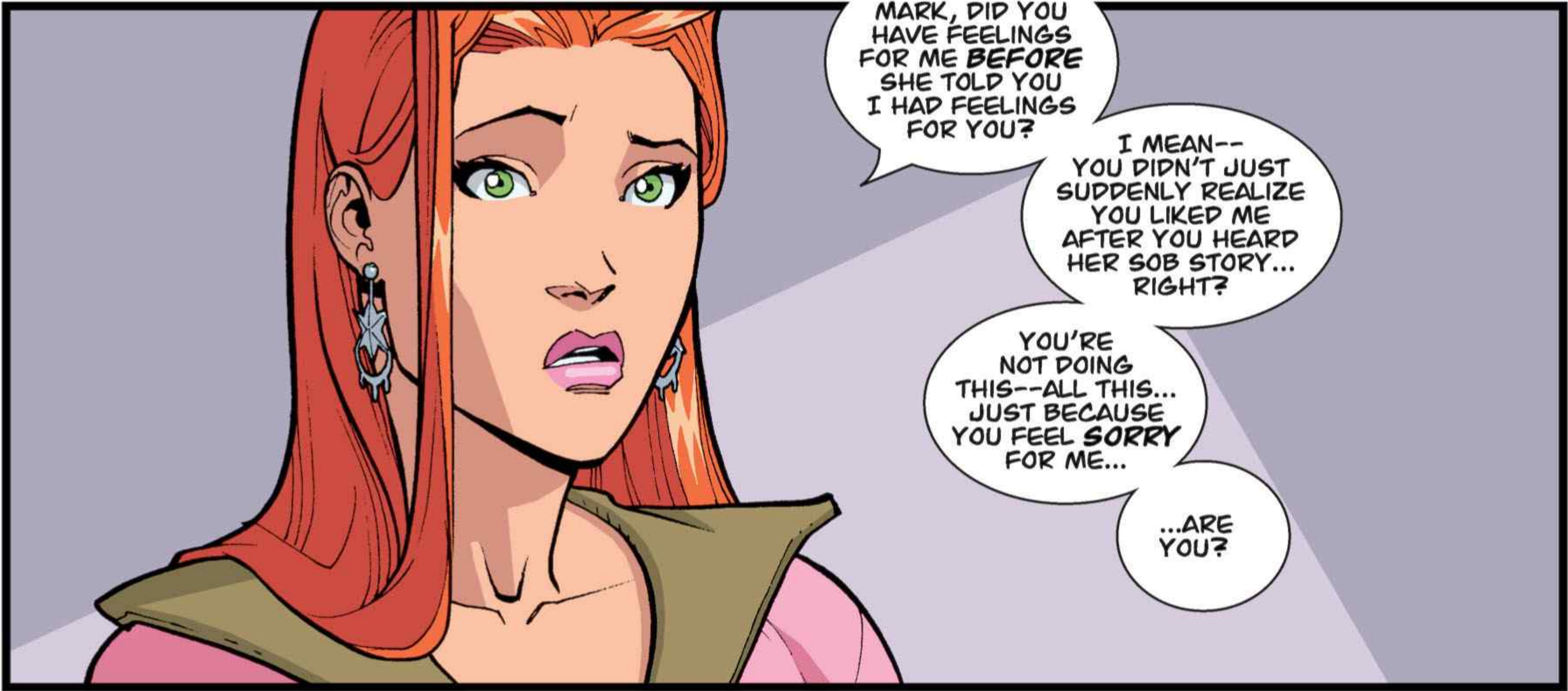


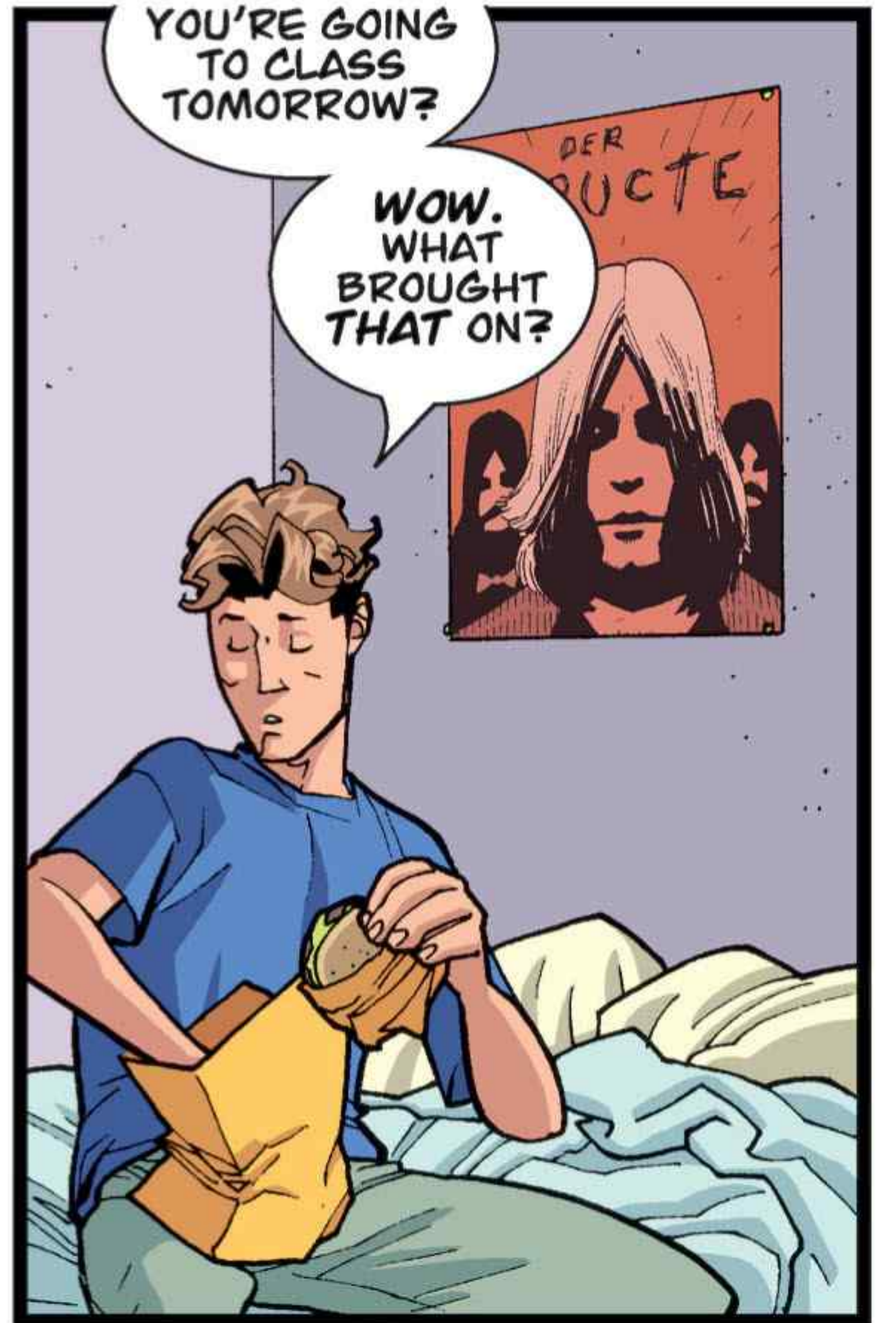
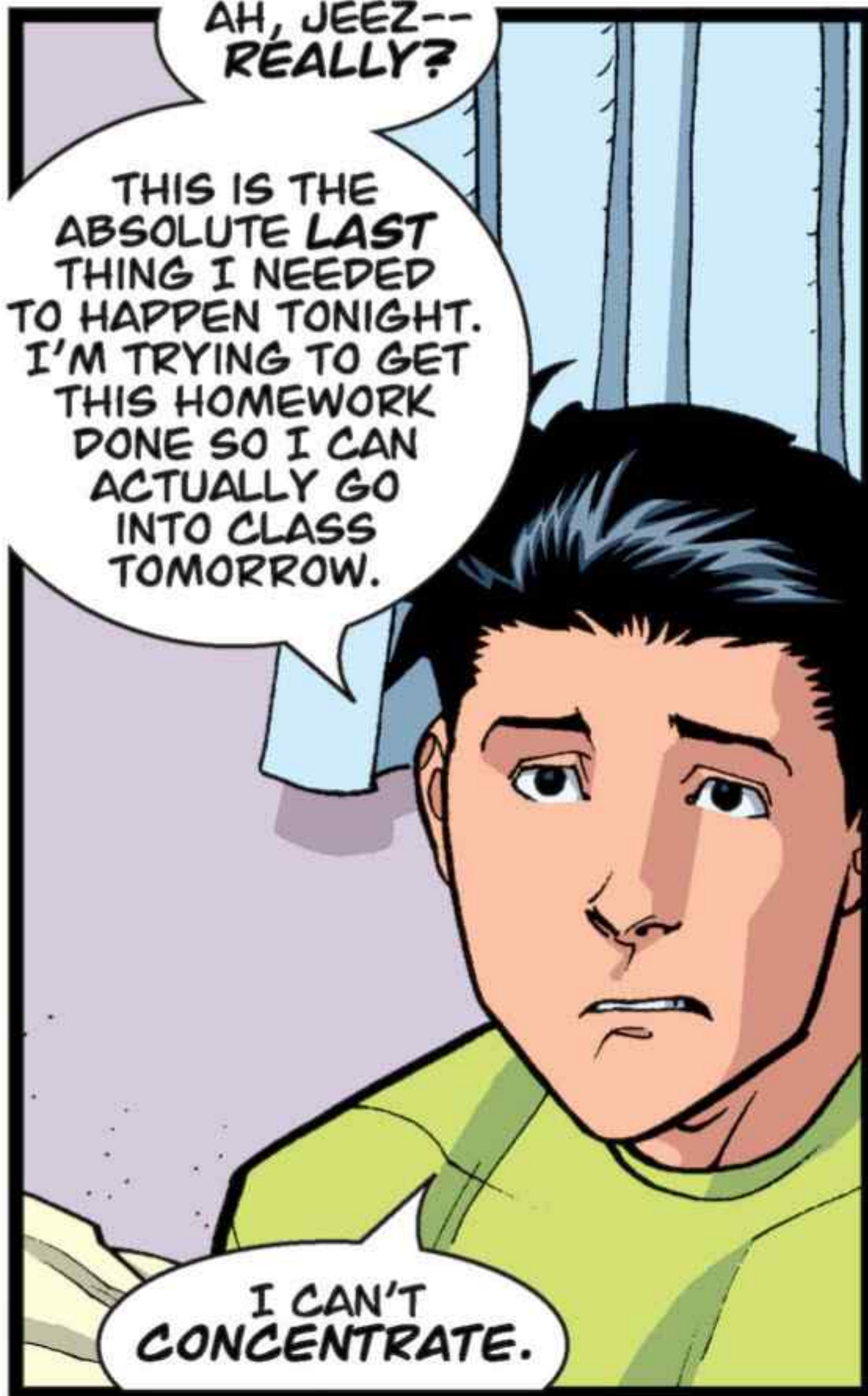
I INVITED YOU TO COME STAY WITH ME IN AFRICA... I HOPED YOU'D COME ALONE.

THAT WOULD MEAN YOU **DID** HAVE FEELINGS FOR ME.

BUT YOU BROUGHT HER.









THE GRAYSON HOUSE. HOME OF MARK'S MOTHER, DEBBIE GRAYSON AND MARK'S HALF-BROTHER OLIVER GRAYSON.



KEYS, KEYS, KEYS.

WHERE ARE MY KEYS?

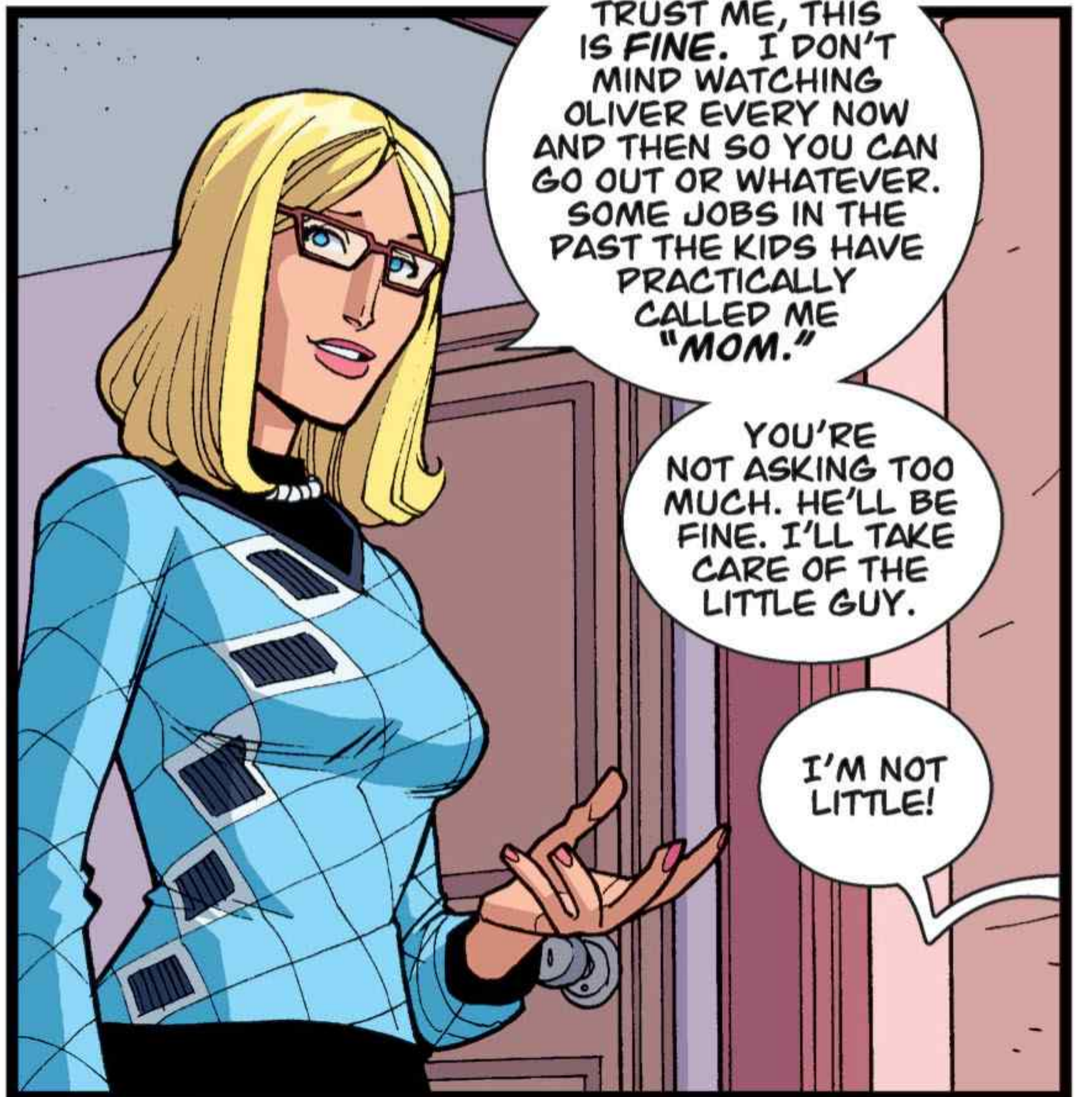
HERE, MOM!

THEY WERE UNDER THE COUCH THE WHOLE TIME.



OH, THANK YOU, OLIVER.

APRIL, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE COOL WITH THIS? YOUR JOB TITLE DOESN'T INCLUDE BABYSITTER.



TRUST ME, THIS IS FINE. I DON'T MIND WATCHING OLIVER EVERY NOW AND THEN SO YOU CAN GO OUT OR WHATEVER. SOME JOBS IN THE PAST THE KIDS HAVE PRACTICALLY CALLED ME "MOM."

YOU'RE NOT ASKING TOO MUCH. HE'LL BE FINE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE LITTLE GUY.

I'M NOT LITTLE!



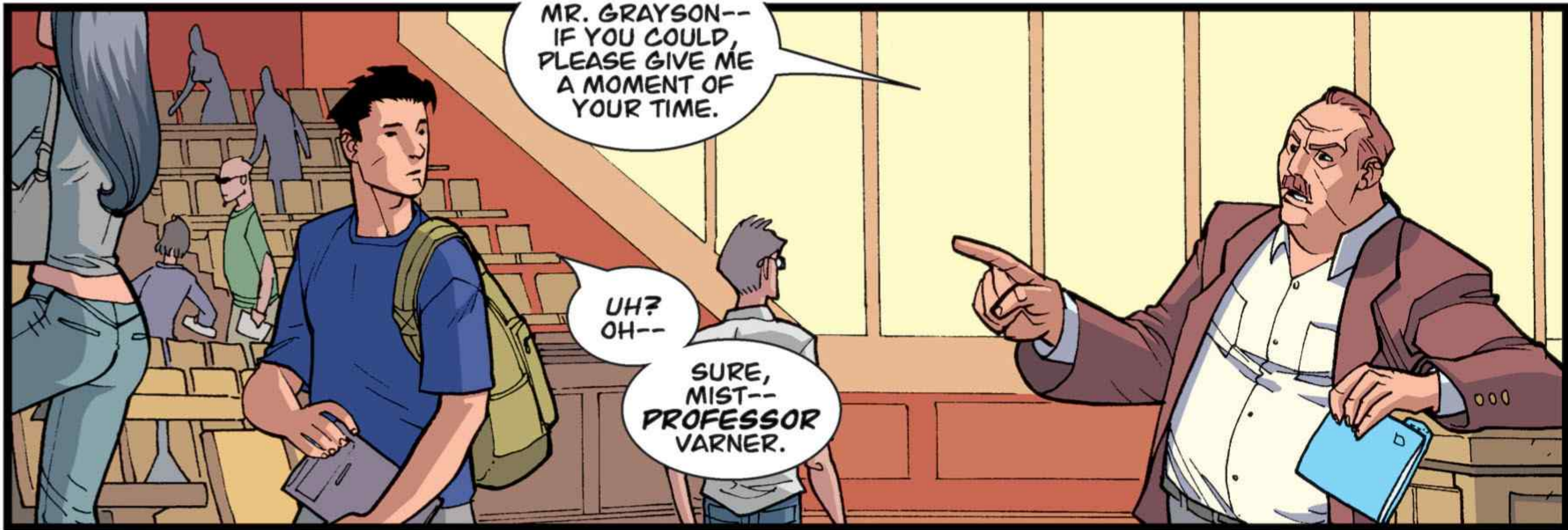
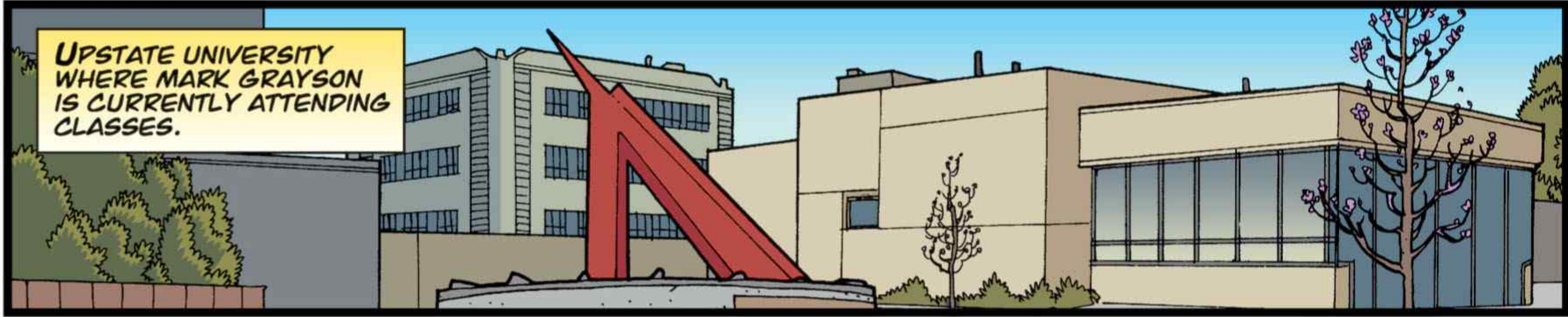
OLIVER, YOU BETTER BEHAVE YOURSELF.

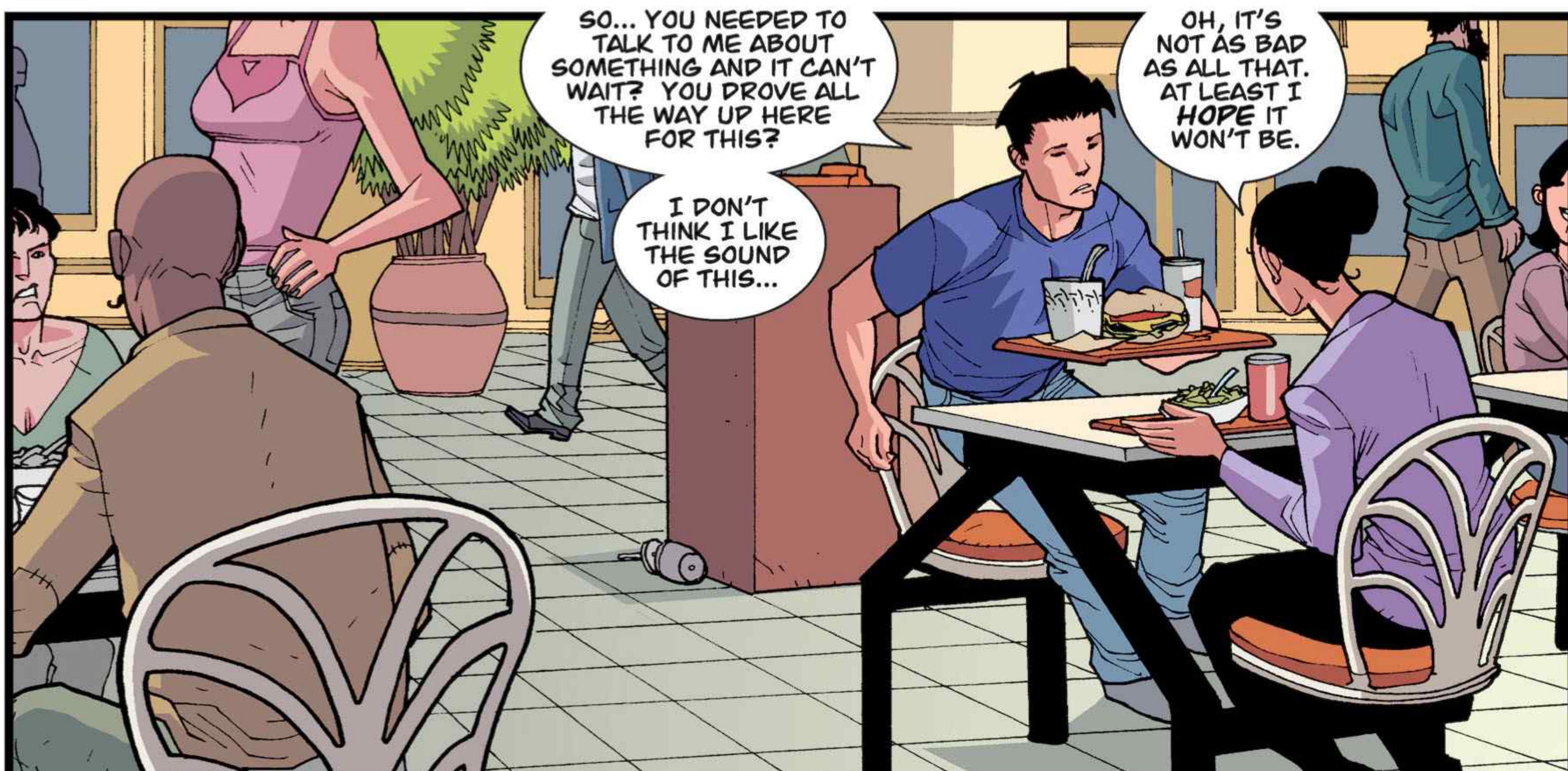
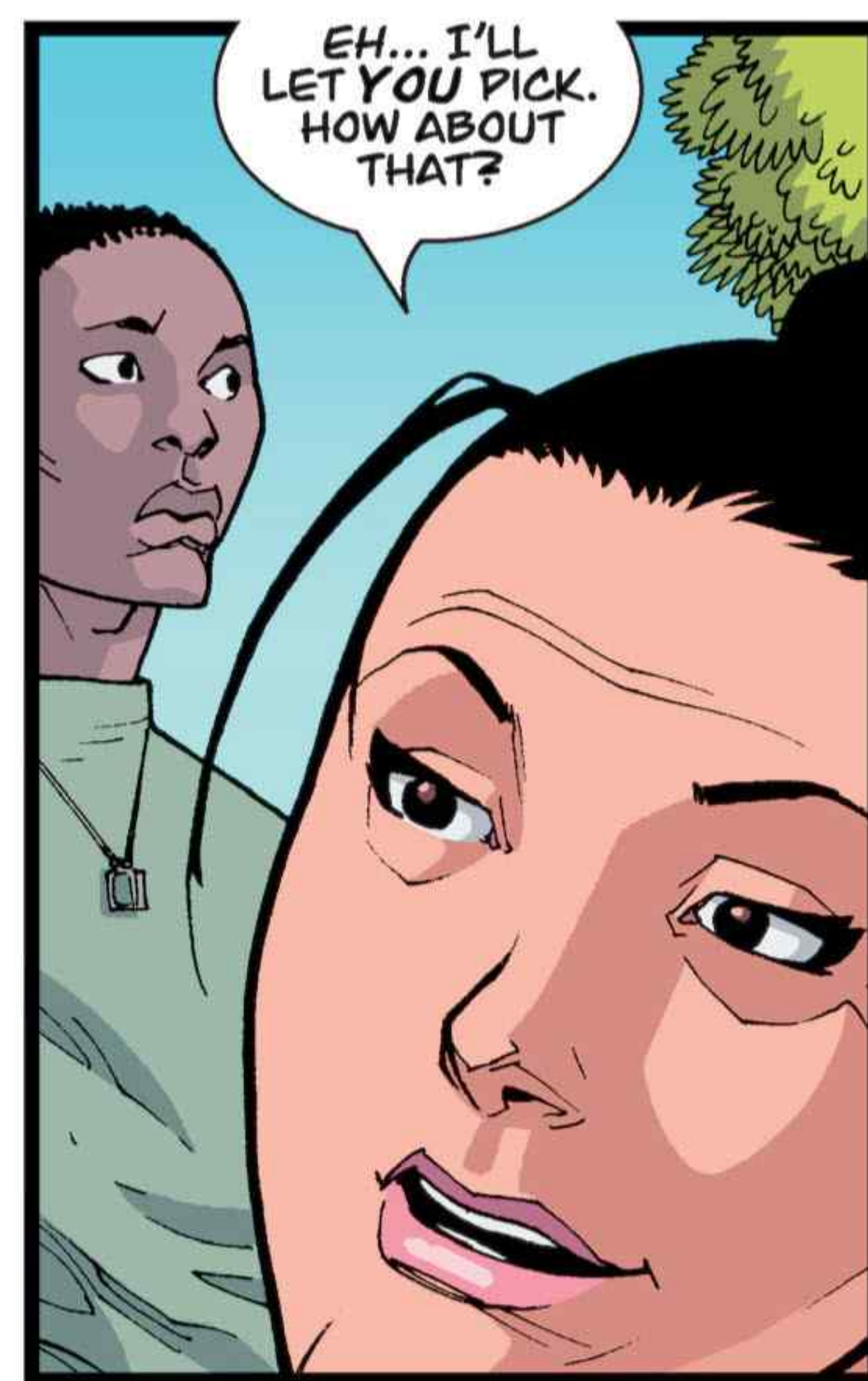
I WILL. BYE, MOM.

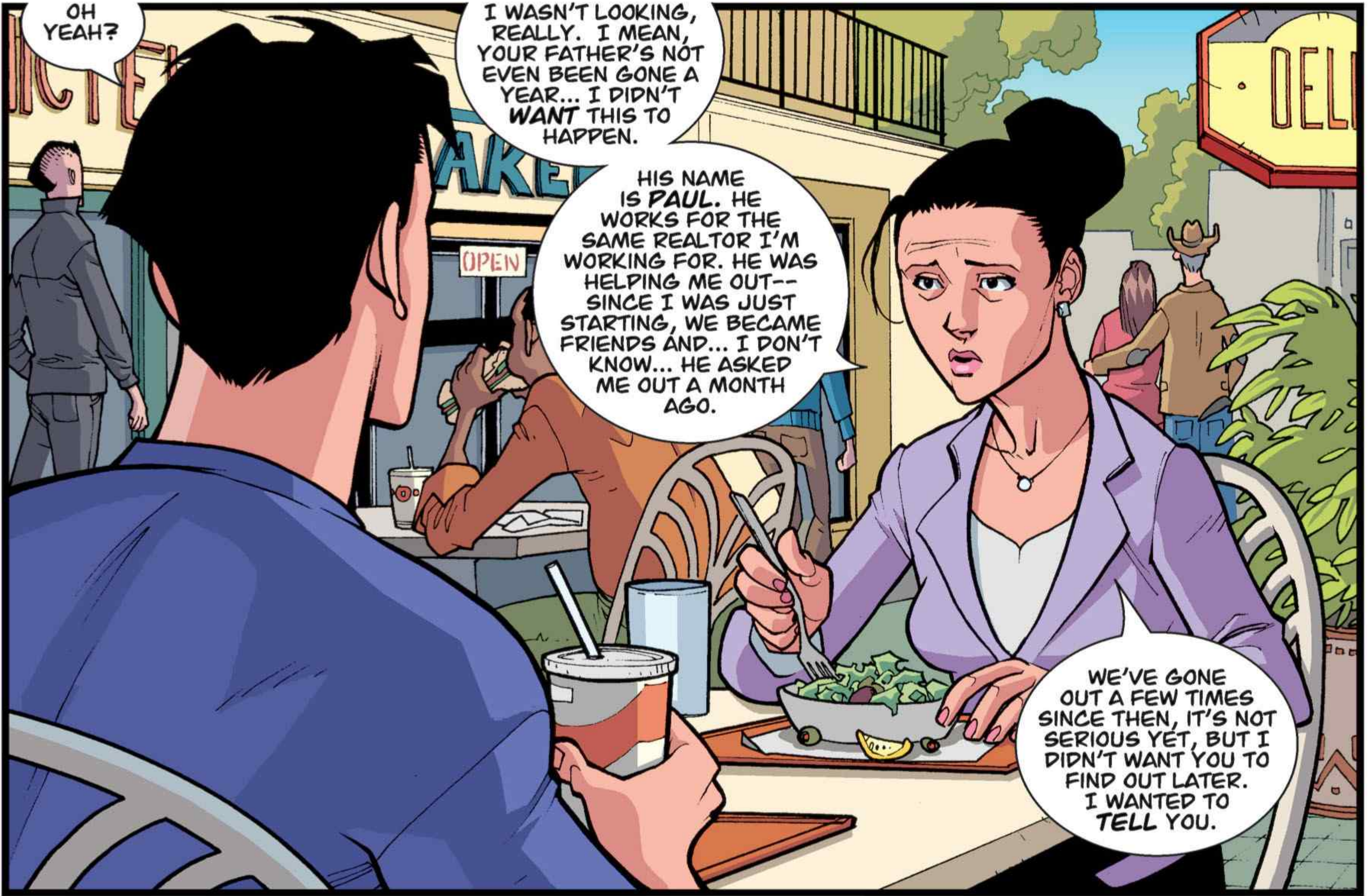
EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE-- JUST GO.

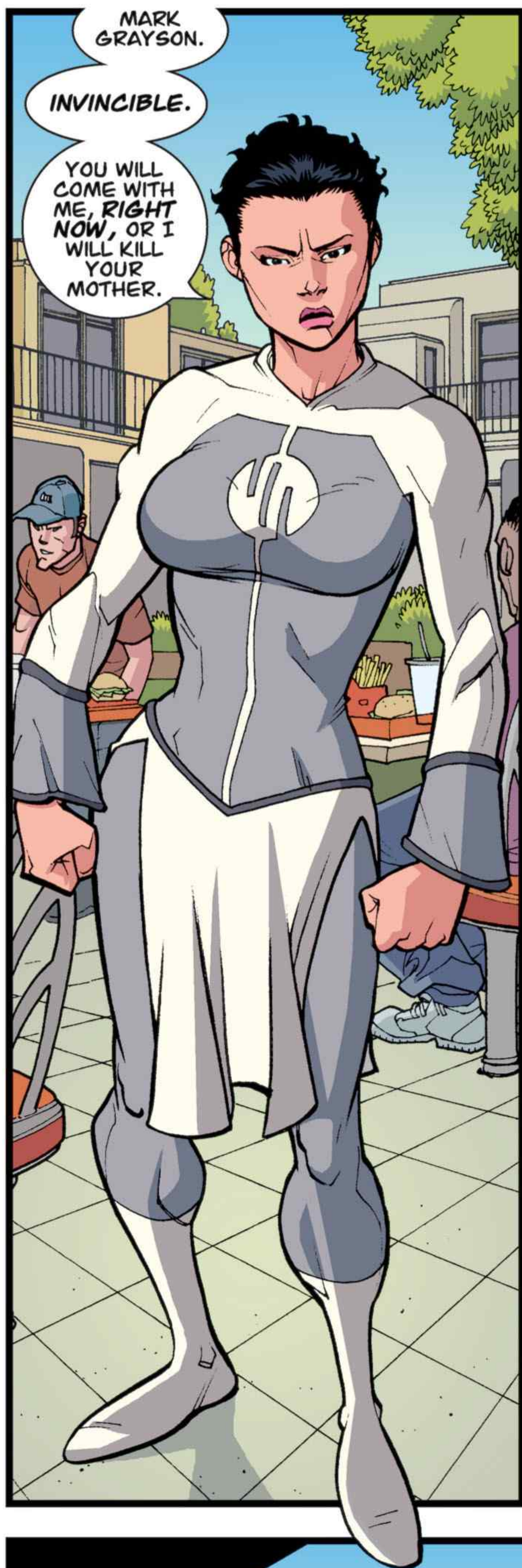
HAVE FUN..

I'M NOT ANTICIPATING THIS BEING "FUN." WISH ME LUCK.



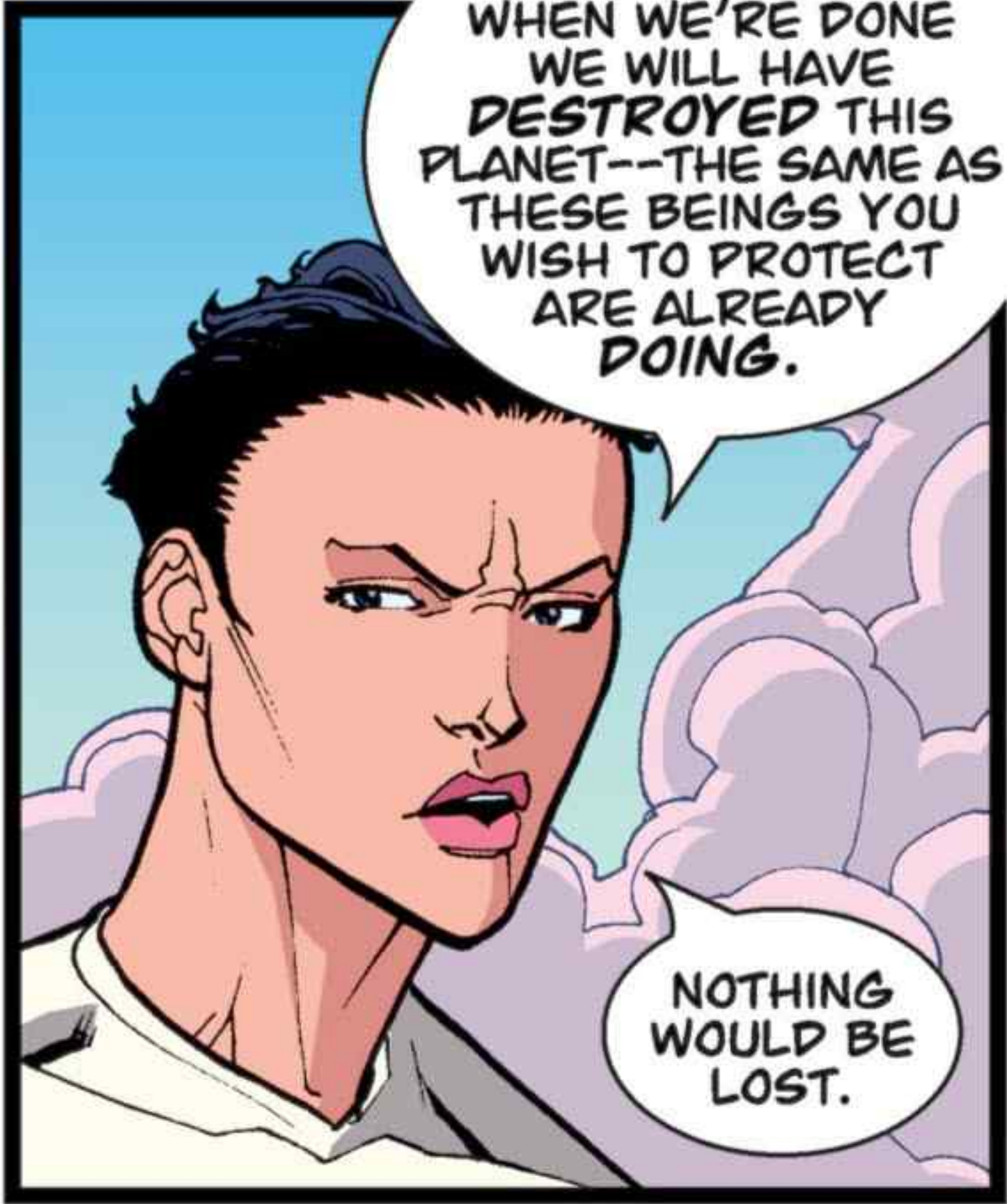
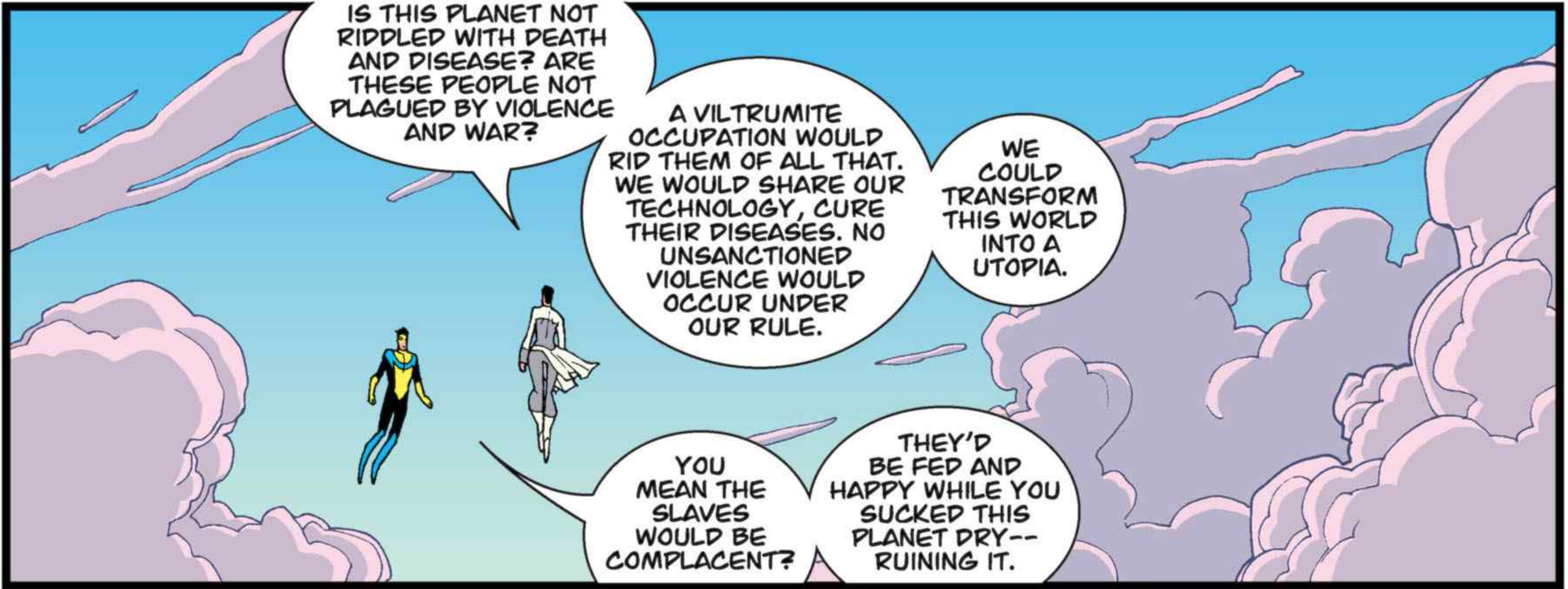




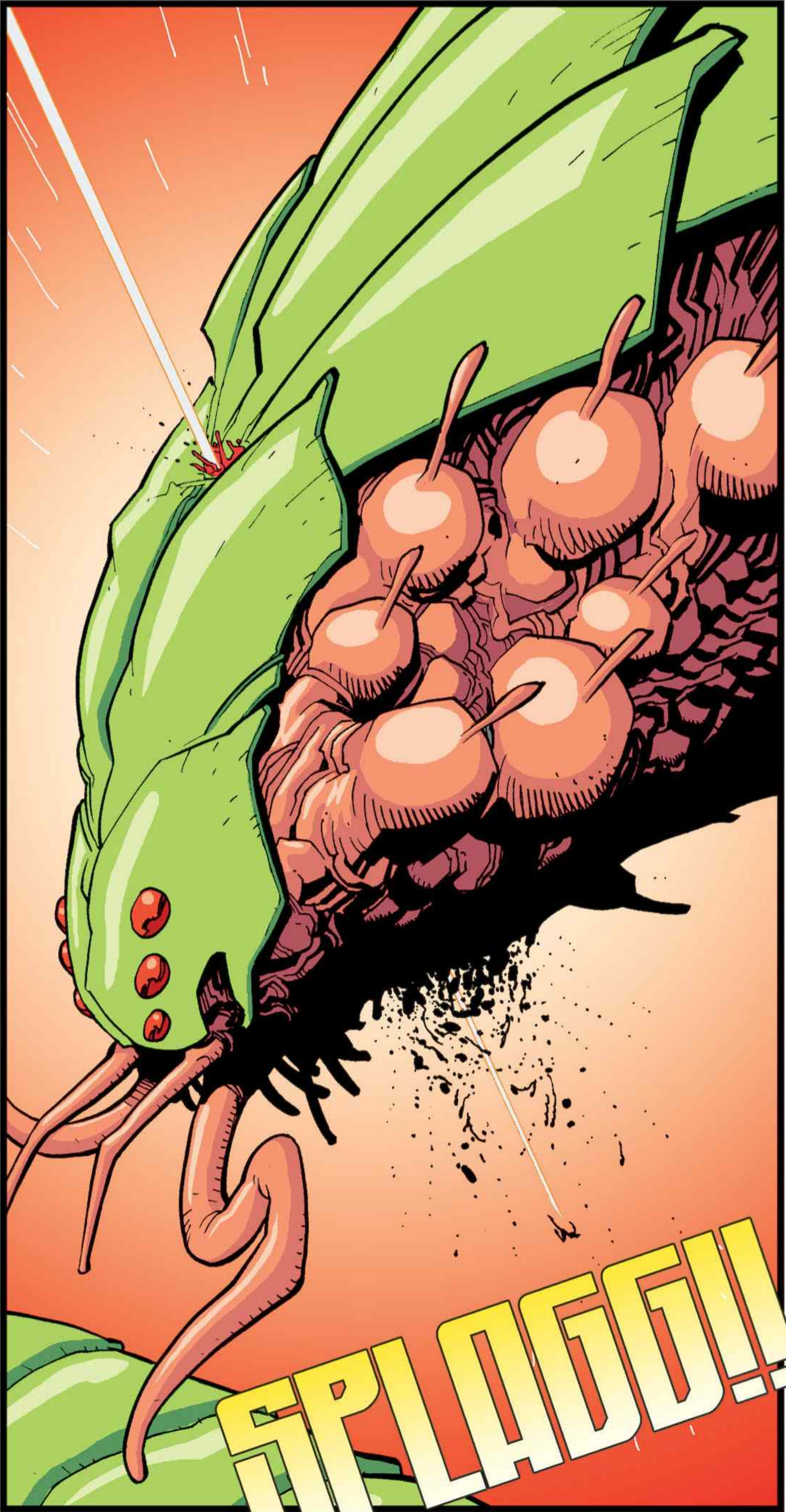
















⇒HUFF!⇐

⇒HUFF!⇐

⇒HUFF!⇐

YOU DID
SOME VERY
IMPRESSIVE
WORK
TODAY.



WHATEVER.

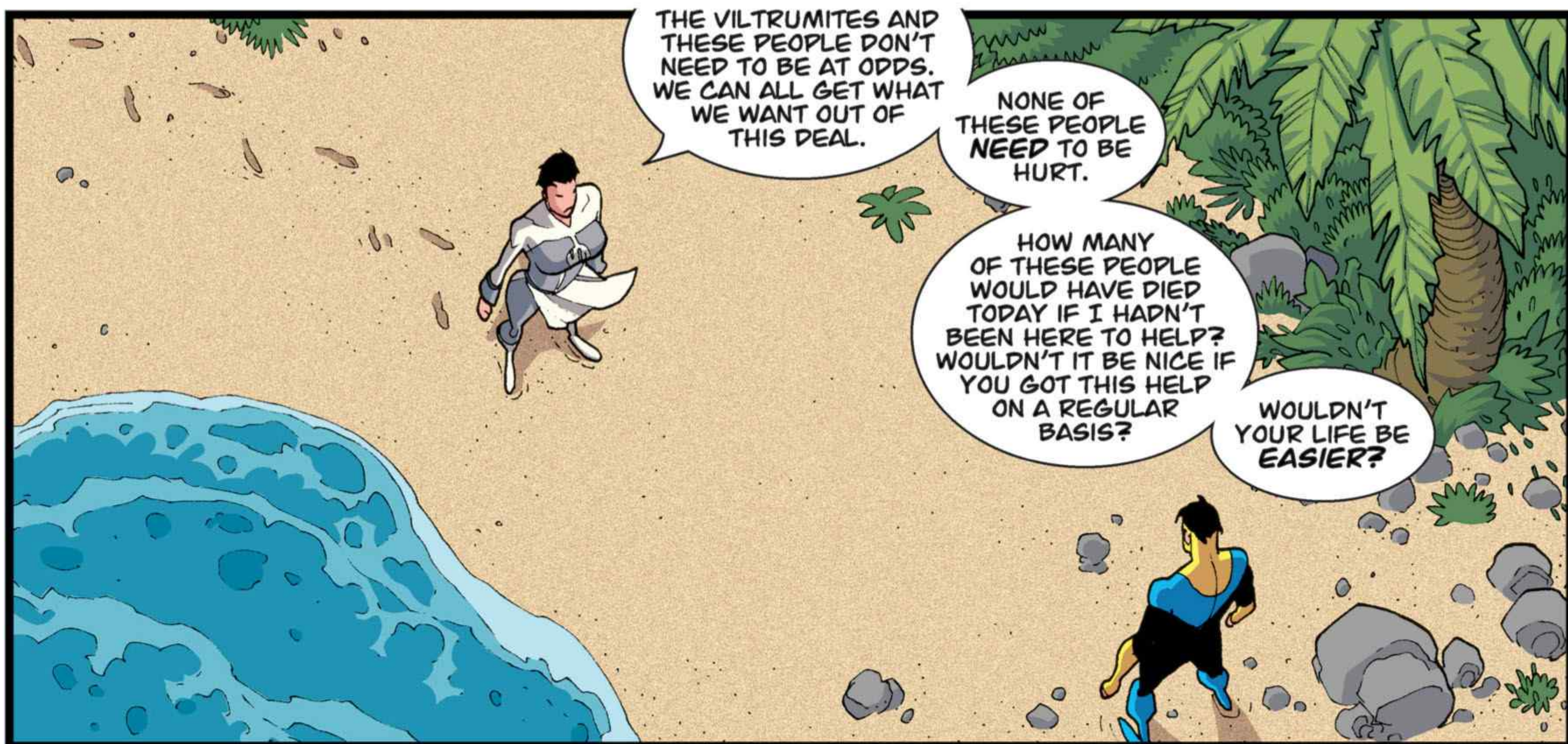
≡HUFF!≡

YOU
DID MOST
OF THE
WORK
HERE.



STILL, I CAN
SEE THAT YOU
CARE A GREAT
DEAL ABOUT THIS
PLANET AND ITS
INHABITANTS.

I
RESPECT
THAT.

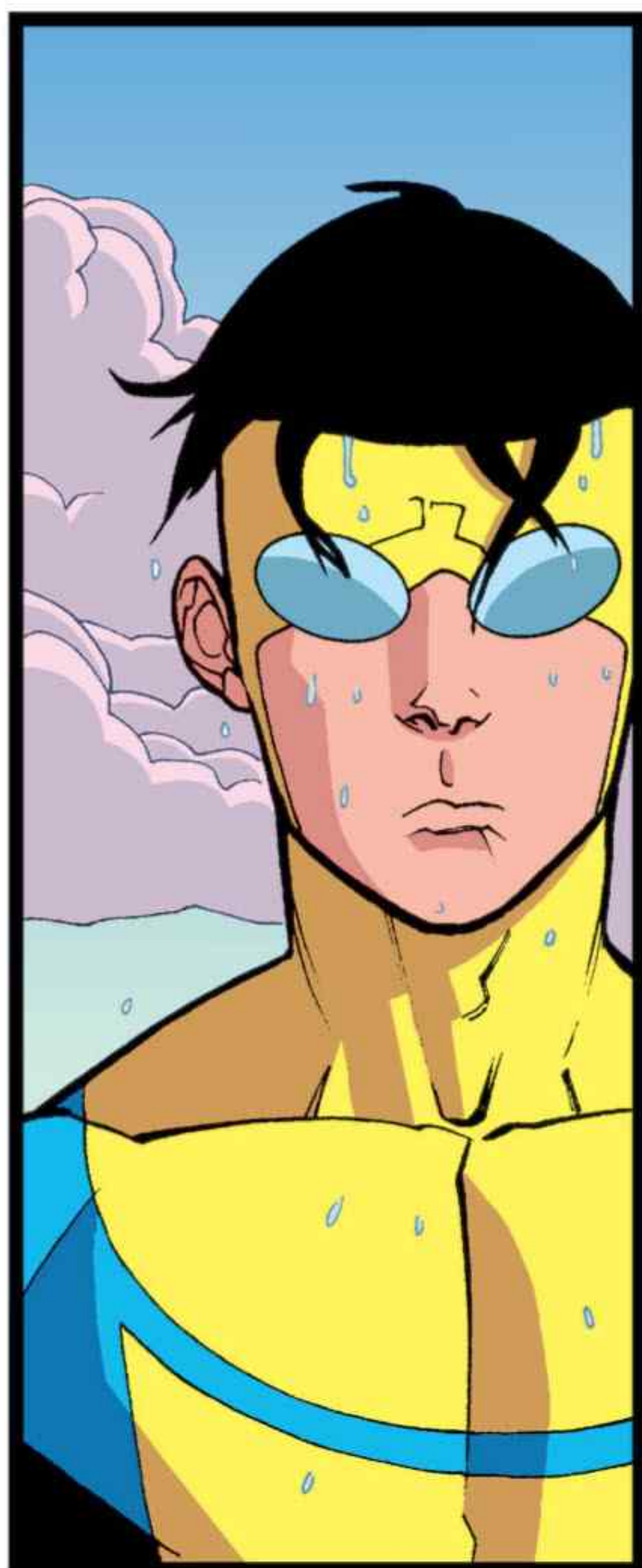


THE VILTRUMITES AND
THESE PEOPLE DON'T
NEED TO BE AT ODDS.
WE CAN ALL GET WHAT
WE WANT OUT OF
THIS DEAL.

NONE OF
THESE PEOPLE
NEED TO BE
HURT.

HOW MANY
OF THESE PEOPLE
WOULD HAVE DIED
TODAY IF I HADN'T
BEEN HERE TO HELP?
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF
YOU GOT THIS HELP
ON A REGULAR
BASIS?

WOULDN'T
YOUR LIFE BE
EASIER?



SO--
WHAT DO
YOU SAY? ARE
YOU GOING TO
WORK WITH US?



SORRY.

I'M
STILL NOT
CONVINCED.



I'M SORRY
TO HEAR
THAT.



WHO-KO-M!!!

THIS
WASN'T A
NEGOTIATION.